

# Keys to Recovery

**Minneapolis VA Health Care System**

**Created and Edited by Veterans Bridge to Recovery Members and Staff**



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## **Submit Your Work to Keys to Recovery**

As you know, we are now posting online:

<http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/services/MentalHealth/vbr.asp>

Click on the site at the beginning of each month to see what's new.

We still want to hear from you. The more submissions we get from vets, the more often we can put out this newsletter! Please send in your stories, tips, and community events to [KeystoRecovery@gmail.com](mailto:KeystoRecovery@gmail.com). You can also leave written items with the clerical staff in the Outpatient Mental Health clinic. Please address any items to Dr. Hoffman-Konn and note that they are for the Keys to Recovery newsletter. Any mailed items should be sent to Keys to Recovery, c/o CRRC, 1201 Harmon Place Suite 103, Minneapolis, MN 55403.

Thanks for reading and keep coming back!

## **Getting Involved in Your Community**

There are so many ways to be involved. You can start by asking yourself what's interesting or important to you. You can also try new things. Here are some resources to consider as you are considering more ways to get involved.

Minnesota Department of Human Services, <http://mn.gov/dhs/>: DHS provides health care and other services to low-income and otherwise vulnerable individuals. They want public input on how they use resources—this could be a great advocacy opportunity. You can learn more by looking at the website under “public participation,” or by calling DHS at 651-431-2000 (or 800-627-3529 for TDD/TTY).

Volunteering: Is there a local animal shelter, veteran's organization, or charity you'd like to support? Do you belong to a faith community? These types of places often want volunteers. You can call or stop by and ask if they are looking for volunteers. You can also look at the website [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org). You can search for "virtual" and real-life opportunities in your location.

Take a class: Search for "community education" using your favorite search engine (google.com, bing.com, ask.com, etc.). Many communities offer classes to adults at a low cost (or even sometimes free). These aren't graded, they are usually fun & informative. Topics range widely, e.g. anything from dance to how to use credit wisely. Community education is offered through the public school system in your area. Here are a few resources:

Rochester: [www.rochesterce.org](http://www.rochesterce.org)

Minneapolis: [commed.mpls.k12.mn.us](http://commed.mpls.k12.mn.us)

Stillwater: [Stillwater.k12.mn.us](http://Stillwater.k12.mn.us)

St. Paul: [commed.spps.org](http://commed.spps.org)

### **The Bewildered Man**

By a Fellow Veteran, written in 2002

One day displeased with the old life  
Shy and nervous from all my worry  
A pitiful something overwhelmed me  
It tormented me, I was very perplexed  
I was once again very doubtful of myself  
A proud man scared and bewildered I ran to the hills.

Hide me from the day I cried.  
Uncertain and ashamed I covered my body with mud.  
The hills were dark they held no life  
Because they too had been betrayed by the light  
The Sun has no meaning to me I try  
So hard to hide myself from the overwhelming pains of life  
There is no love for me on this earth  
All things have bewildered me  
I am lost within a desperate race to find myself  
My days are foggy and full of uncertain things.  
I hope soon that this would all end  
I am very fearful of the days to come  
I feel so misunderstood  
I am tormented

## **A Kid I Knew is Gone**

### **By A VA Staff Member**

When I was 7 years old, I had a friend I'll call Will. He was funny and silly and nice to everyone. We were in elementary school and daycare together. He lived a few blocks from my family, and we had lots of friends in common. We didn't spend a lot of time together after second grade, but my brother was friends with him through high school. He says Will was friends with everyone. He also said Will was casually drinking a spiked pop when they ditched a class together in junior high. I guess he might not have been very happy even then. Will graduated, grew up, got a job, got married, had a couple of kids. My brother saw him at a class reunion, and he looked happy enough there. Will got divorced, got remarried, got into bicycling. A few weeks ago a friend from our hometown told us he died. So many people expressed sadness, surprise, hurt. So many people got together to remember him. I found out he committed suicide. Even though I talk to people every day who have suicidal thoughts, I wondered how that could be, and why. I looked at the evidence of how many people cared about him, both close to home and thousands of miles away. I don't know what was going on in his life, or if he shared his thoughts with anyone. I don't know if he knew how much people cared. I don't know if it would have mattered if he had known that even people he hadn't talked to in 20 years still thought about him, had fond memories of him, and now feel a little piece of their childhood is lost because he isn't there to possibly share it with.

I share this because I know many of our readers (and many other people) have suicidal thoughts. I know it's hard to admit, and talk about. I know that sometimes we as providers don't react well when you do. Family or friends might not respond the way you want either. But you aren't alone. And there are people who care, and want to help, even when we fumble in getting out the right response. Suicide is avoidable. I don't believe it's your only option, even though it might look that way at times. I hope that you will take a risk and ask for help. Just like Will, you are loved by someone, somewhere. Maybe lots of someones in lots of somewheres. And you are worth our effort.

#### Who to call if you're in crisis:

911 in an emergency

Nationwide Veteran's Crisis Line (also available to non-vets) 1-800-273-8255

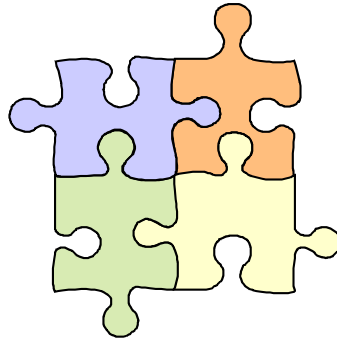
Minnesota Crisis Connection, 24 hour hotline: 612-379-6363

Minneapolis VA: 612-725-2000, ask for the Psychiatrist on Duty

#### Here is another list of resources, both phone numbers and online:

<http://www.suicidehotlines.com/minnesota.html>

# VBR Puzzle Page



**Can you find more words than the VBR vets in the Boggle puzzle below?**

Try to find as many words as possible of three or more letters each and write them on a piece of paper. The words must only use a single letter on the Boggle puzzle once (unless it appears twice- having more than one die with an "s" on it, for example), and all letters in the word must be connected on the Boggle board horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

**GJSY**

**ERTE**

**POSR**

**INEU**

<b>&gt; 25</b>	<b>Genius</b>
<b>21-25</b>	<b>Expert</b>
<b>16-20</b>	<b>Professor</b>
<b>11-15</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>6-10</b>	<b>Student</b>
<b>0-5</b>	<b>Beginner</b>

Email in the # of words you found to “[Keystorecovery@gmail.com](mailto:Keystorecovery@gmail.com)”. The winner will be announced in the next Keys to Recovery Newsletter!

## Word Find

### Theme: Elements of Recovery

p n a g a u h t w t e v t r r  
e o o a t i n t q m y r f e p  
r h a i e l o u b f o b s s t  
s b o d t n v e x p d p k p n  
o e v l b c c c p f o k j e e  
n i q c i u e u d n f z y c m  
c a b e j s s r s w g o n t r  
e r d f z r t i i i j h e k e  
n h w u e s b i p d o x e c w  
t y p e g i u h c p f j q s o  
e m p a l b m g e u y l s i p  
r r e i m y g f d q k n e j m  
e z t n o n l i n e a r n s e  
d y x i a w o g p i c g a c v  
d e s a b s h t g n e r t s f

empowerment  
holistic  
hope  
nonlinear  
peersupport  
personcentered  
respect  
responsibility  
selfdirection  
strengthsbased